

# 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum

## EU Strategy for the Danube Region

5 – 6 November 2025

Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Interreg  
Danube Region

Co-funded by  
the European Union



## THE 14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL FORUM OF THE EU STRATEGY FOR THE DANUBE REGION (EUSDR)

### *Flowing Together, Growing Together*

4–6 November 2025, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Venue: Hotel Holiday, Zmaja od Bosne 4, 71000, Sarajevo

## Draft Agenda

**Monday, 3 November 2025, 14.00-17.30 CET**

**14.00-17.30**

### **Steering Group Meeting EUSDR PA 3**

Location: Room “Una”

*The EUSDR Priority Area 3 Steering Group (SG) is a relevant body of representatives from intergovernmental institutions of the EUSDR Member States. It meets at least twice a year, either online or onsite, and is coordinated jointly by the Priority Area Coordinators (PACs) from Romania (Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration - MDPWA) and Bulgaria (Ministry of Tourism - MT).*

*The SG meeting includes an evaluation of PA 3 activities and the formulation of plans for the forthcoming period. Irina COZMA (MDPWA, Romania) together with the Bulgarian PAC representative (MT) presents an overview of recent EUSDR PA 3 activities, provides an outlook on initiatives for 2026, and introduces the EUSDR PA 3 flagship project, alongside forthcoming actions related to cultural tourism – CAST, NONA, IBC, Culinary Trail, Mystical Danube, CultHerit, COMHERITOUR, and CRAFTS, extending until the end of 2025.*

*The agenda further encompasses the announcement of the subsequent SG meeting and the upcoming edition of the “Danube Salon” in Berlin, organised back-to-back with ITB Berlin under the Bulgarian EUSDR Presidency. Discussions also address EUSDR PA 3’s engagement in other relevant project activities and events at both regional and macro-regional levels, the exchange of best practices across other Macro-Regional Strategies (MRS), regional initiatives such as CPMR projects, and the exploration of synergies with the EUSAIR Facility Point on horizontal themes and cooperation with the Youth Council.*

*Representatives of relevant projects, as well as local and regional stakeholders from the EUSDR and beyond, receive invitations to participate.*

*Closed meeting, attendance by invitation only.*

**Tuesday, 4 November 2025, 09.30-19.00 CET**

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|                    | <b>Parallel sessions:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>09.30-11.00</b> | <p><b>EUSDR PA 8 Event (DECIDE - Digital Services for Circular Economy - a Toolbox for Regional Developers &amp; SME- project meeting) I</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Holiday”</p> <p><i>The DECIDE project (Digital Services for Circular Economy – a Toolbox for Regional Developers &amp; SMEs) supports the development of circular economy business models (CEBMs) through digital tools and methods tailored for SMEs and regional developers in the Danube Region. Coordinated by ZD.BB, DECIDE focuses on resource-intensive sectors, including packaging, textiles, batteries, food, and smart cities, integrating blockchain-based monitoring and simulations of ecological and social impacts. The project runs from January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2026, with a total budget of approximately €2.89 million, co-financed by the EU’s Interreg Danube Region Programme (~€2.31 million). Following the successful development of the DECIDE toolbox and best practice showcases in the first phase, current efforts are geared toward validation, implementation, and regional outreach. In July 2024, DECIDE was recognised as a EUSDR PA 8 Flagship Project, highlighting its strategic importance in advancing the circular economy in the region.</i></p> <p><i>Closed meeting, attendance by invitation only.</i></p> |
| <b>10.00-11.00</b> | <p><b>12<sup>th</sup> Danube Participation Day: Local Voices, European Future - The Crucial Role of Communities in Shaping EU Policy and Driving Enlargement I</b></p> <p>Location: Congress Room</p> <p><i>This conference is dedicated to exploring how we can foster meaningful participation of local actors to improve the quality and sustainability of the EU accession process. We aim to learn from one another, share best practices, and develop strategies to amplify local voices in the broader European integration journey.</i></p> <p><i>Join stakeholders from across the Danube Region for a day of exchange, participation, and inspiration—including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Engaging Panel Discussions</i></li> <li>• <i>Interactive World Café Sessions</i></li> <li>• <i>The Danube Participation Agora</i></li> <li>• <i>Networking Opportunities</i></li> </ul> <p>Agenda, registration and further information available under this <a href="#">link</a>.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>11.00-11.30</b> | <i>Coffee break</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                    | <b>Parallel sessions:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>11.30-13.00</b> | <p><b>12<sup>th</sup> Danube Participation Day: Local Voices, European Future - The Crucial Role of Communities in Shaping EU Policy and Driving Enlargement II</b></p> <p>Location: Congress Room</p> <p>Agenda, registration and further information available under this <a href="#">link</a>.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>11.30-13.00</b> | <p><b>EUSDR PA 8 Event (DECIDE - Digital Services for Circular Economy - a Toolbox for Regional Developers &amp; SME- project meeting) II</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Holiday”</p> <p><i>Closed meeting, attendance by invitation only.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

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| <b>13.00-14.30</b>   | <i>Lunch break</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|                      | <b>Parallel sessions:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>14.30-16.00</b>   | <p><b>12<sup>th</sup> Danube Participation Day: Local Voices, European Future - The Crucial Role of Communities in Shaping EU Policy and Driving Enlargement III</b></p> <p>Location: Congress Room</p> <p>Agenda, registration and further information available under this <a href="#">link</a>.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>14.30-16.00</b>   | <p><b>EUSDR PA 8 Event (DECIDE- Digital Services for Circular Economy - a Toolbox for Regional Developers &amp; SME- project meeting) III</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Holiday”</p> <p><i>Closed meeting, attendance by invitation only.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>16.00-16.30</b>   | <i>Coffee break</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                      | <b>Parallel sessions:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>16.30-18.00</b>   | <p><b>EUSDR PA 8 Event (DECIDE- Digital Services for Circular Economy - a Toolbox for Regional Developers &amp; SME- project meeting) IV</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Holiday”</p> <p><i>Closed meeting, attendance by invitation only.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>17.00-19.00</b>   | <p><b>Danube Transfer Centre Network Ceremony (EUSDR PA 8, RAIS, SERDA)</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Neretva”</p> <p><i>Steinbeis Europa Zentrum, in collaboration with the Culinary Trail Project, invites you to the Danube Transfer Centre (DTC) Network Ceremony. The DTC Network is a flagship initiative under EUSDR PA 8 “Competitiveness” promoting innovation and technology transfer across the Danube Region. The event also supports cross-sector collaboration between EUSDR PA 3 “Tourism and Culture” and EUSDR PA 8 stakeholders as part of the Culinary Trail Project activities. The ceremony highlights successful cooperation models while also reflecting on regional contributions to tourism, education, skills, and labour market development. New DTC members are welcomed, including RAIS and SERDA from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The event aims to strengthen partnerships and foster regional innovation and it aligns with the broader goals of the EUSDR Annual Forum. Participants can expect networking, knowledge exchange, and strategic collaboration opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Closed meeting, attendance by invitation only.</i></p> |
| <b>19:00 - 21:30</b> | <b>Welcoming Reception for All Participants</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## DAY 1: Wednesday, 5 November 2025, 09.30-17.00 CET

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| 08.00-09.30 | Registration                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 09.30-11.00 | <p><b>MINISTERIAL MEETING: MEETING OF DANUBE REGION FOREIGN MINISTERS</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Holiday”</p> <p>Traditionally, the political high-level meeting of ministers is part of the EUSDR Annual Forum. A ministerial declaration / joint statement will be adopted at the meeting.</p> <p><b>Closed meeting, upon invitation only.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|             | <b>Parallel sessions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 09.30-11.00 | <p><b>EUSDR PA 2 event (plus results SECW 2025): Affordable, secure and sustainable energy for the Danube Region</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Neretva”</p> <p><i>To support the EU’s 2050 climate neutrality target, EUSDR PA 2 focuses on reducing fossil fuel dependence, enhancing energy efficiency, and increasing the use of local renewables. Given the region’s outdated energy systems, especially in non-EU countries, the session explores how energy diversification and efficiency – particularly in heating, cooling, and industry – can strengthen resilience and accelerate the green transition.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 09.30-11.00 | <p><b>EUSDR PA 11 Event: Impacts for the Danube Region of the war in Ukraine in regards of security</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Una”</p> <p><i>The Danube Region is a dynamic space of security and prosperity. Cooperation between the members of this region is essential to tackle current challenges in Europe. The Munich Police Department presents the measures currently undertaken to illustrate how EUSDR PA 11 supports law enforcement in safeguarding the Danube Region. The presentation covers initiatives designed to enhance international police cooperation and information exchange, as well as case studies that highlight the ways in which the EUSDR actively promotes collaboration.</i></p> <p><i>The session is delivered by a representative of the Munich Police in partnership with a representative of the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime.</i></p> |
| 09.30-11.00 | <p><b>Steering Group Meeting EUSDR PA 8</b></p> <p>Location: Room "Drina"</p> <p><i>The EUSDR PA 8 Steering Group (SG) is a stable body of representatives from relevant intergovernmental institutions of the EUSDR Member States. It meets regularly twice a year and is coordinated jointly by the Priority Area Coordinators (PACs) from Baden-Württemberg and Croatia.</i></p> <p><i>The SG meeting includes a mid-term evaluation of EUSDR PA 8 activities and outlines planning activities for the future period. Carmen HAWKINS (Ministry of Economic Affairs, Labour and Tourism, Baden-Württemberg) and the Croatian PAC representative (Ministry of Economy) presents an overview of EUSDR PA 8 recent activities, an outlook on 2026 initiatives, and proposed minor project revisions until the end of 2025.</i></p>                                                                        |

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|                    | <p><i>Further agenda items include announcing the next SG meeting and the upcoming edition of the “Danube Region at the Turn of Times” event in Ulm. Discussions also cover EUSDR PA 8 participation in the Mediterranean and MRS Week in Izola, in September 2025, exploring synergies with the EUSAIR Facility Point on horizontal themes such as bio/ circular economy, digitalisation, and Youth Council cooperation.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, the EUSDR PA 8 Working Group Coordinators presents updates, including a concept for a thematic exchange and site visit in the first half of 2026, subject to DRP Managing Authority / Joint Secretariat approval.</i></p> <p><i>Closed meeting, attendance by invitation only.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>11.00-11.30</b> | Coffee break & Family photo                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>11.30-12.30</b> | <p><b>OPENING OF THE 14<sup>th</sup> EUSDR ANNUAL FORUM</b></p> <p>Location: Congress Room</p> <p><i>Opening remarks: Elvira Habota, Director of the Directorate for European Integration, Elmedin Konaković, Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Commissioner(s)</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>12.30-14.00</b> | <p><b>Danube Region Programme Annual Event: From Vision to Cohesion: Funding Pathways for EU Integration in the Region</b></p> <p>Location: Congress Room</p> <p><i>The first part of the session explores the modernisation and territorial focus of the EU Cohesion Policy beyond 2027, emphasising its role in supporting regional development and integration. Discussions cover the link between accession and cohesion instruments, and the growing importance of cooperation between macro-regional strategies (MRS) and transnational cooperation on one side and on key contributions to better regional integration, lessons learned, and opportunities aligned with future Cohesion Policy goals on the other side. The role of improved governance mechanisms, along with the unique position of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) and the Interreg Danube Region Programme (DRP) in driving continued regional integration, will also be tackled.</i></p> <p><i>The second part of the session is dedicated to the discussion of key topics for the region: demographic change and water availability.</i></p> |
| <b>12.45-13.25</b> | <p><b>Handing-over ceremony and press conference</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bosnian and Herzegovinian EUSDR Presidency</li> <li>• Bulgarian EUSDR Presidency</li> </ul> <p>Location: Room “Holiday”</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>14.00-15.30</b> | Lunch break                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                    | <b>Parallel sessions:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>15.30-17.00</b> | <p><b>EUSDR PA 10 Event: Masterclass- How local participation reinforces EU enlargement</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Holiday”</p> <p><i>The session Masterclass ‘Enlargement in Action: Civil Society and Municipalities Shaping the Future’ aims at showcasing and discussing the contributions of civil society organisations and municipalities to the EU enlargement process, how their empowerment can be facilitated, and how macro-regional cooperation can support this</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

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|             | <p><i>endeavour.</i></p> <p><i>The session presents the results from the Danube Participation Day 2025 and sets those results into the context of EU Enlargement and academic findings.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 15.30-17.00 | <p><b>EUSDR PA 8: Workshop on Lighthouse Initiatives from the Danube Region</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Neretva”</p> <p><b>Supply Chains &amp; Finance</b> (as part of the EUSDR PA 8 Study “Identification of Lighthouse Projects in the Danube Region”)</p> <p><i>Drawing upon insights from a study commissioned by EUSDR PA 8 and carried out by Steinbeis Europa Zentrum, Pannon Business Network (Hungary) and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, this session examines how resilient supply chains and accessible funding mechanisms – particularly for SMEs – can enhance competitiveness across the Danube Region.</i></p> <p><i>During the workshop, three representatives of selected projects present their results and engage with participants in a discussion on the essential elements of robust supply chain structures and effective, practical financing tools. In line with the priorities of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian EUSDR Presidency, the workshop encourages the exchange of ideas, mutual learning, and inspiration for future applications, concluding with the presentation of project awards and the official release of the final study publication.</i></p> |
| 15.30-17.00 | <p><b>EUSDR PA 8: Working Group meeting on Circular Economy and Bioeconomy</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Una”</p> <p><i>This meeting provides a dedicated platform for structured exchange among national and regional stakeholders committed to advancing the circular and bioeconomy agenda in the Danube Region. The programme includes contributions from members presenting recent developments and ongoing initiatives in the fields of circular economy and bioeconomy. Additionally, Working Group members participate in interactive workshop sessions designed to explore shared challenges, identify synergies, and develop ideas for future cooperation. The meeting also aims to reflect on the strategic direction of the Working Group and discuss priorities for upcoming activities in alignment with the goals of EUSDR PA 8 and the overall EUSDR framework.</i></p> <p><i>Closed meeting, attendance by invitation only.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 19:00       | <p><b>Social event, dinner offered by Bosnian and Herzegovinian EUSDR Presidency</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## DAY 2: Thursday, 6 November 2025, 09.30-16.00 CET

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| 08.00-09.30 | <p><i>Registration</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|             | <p><b>Parallel sessions</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 09.30-11.00 | <p><b>Joint Meeting EUSDR and EUSAIR National Coordinators I</b></p> <p><b>Enhancing EU Accession Support for Candidate Countries in EUSDR and EUSAIR</b></p> <p><b>Closed meeting, upon invitation only.</b></p> <p>Location: Congress Room</p>  |
| 09.30-11.00 | <p><b>Digitalisation, boost for competitiveness, sustainability and growth (EUSDR PA 8, IDDEEA)</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Holiday”</p> <p><i>The event explores the transformative power of digitalisation in the private sector, with a</i></p> |

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|             | <p><i>special focus on SMEs in the Danube Region. It highlights investment opportunities in cutting-edge technologies such as AI, IoT, robotics, and e-commerce systems, while also addressing the potential side effects of digital transformation. Additionally, the event emphasises the crucial role of digital infrastructure development within the public sector, recognising it as a key enabler for businesses to fully leverage the benefits of digitalisation. By fostering discussions among industry leaders, policymakers, and investors, the event aims to accelerate digital adoption, enhance competitiveness, and drive sustainable economic growth.</i></p> <p>Organisers: EUSDR Bosnian and Herzegovinian EUSDR Presidency in cooperation with Bosnian and Herzegovinian Agency for Identification Documents, Registers, and Data Exchange (IDDEA), European Commission, EUSDR PA 8 – Competitiveness of Enterprises and EUSDR PA 1b – Rail-Road-Air Mobility.</p>                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 09.30-11.00 | <p><b>EUSDR PA 8 - Workshop on Lighthouse Initiatives from the Danube Region</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Neretva”</p> <p><b>Green Tech, Circular Economy and Circular Bioeconomy</b> (as part of the EUSDR PA 8 Study “Identification of Lighthouse Projects in The Danube Region”)</p> <p><i>This workshop spotlights pioneering projects in Green Tech, Circular Economy, and Bioeconomy from across the Danube Region—highlighting how sustainable innovation can drive both environmental progress and economic resilience. Commissioned by EUSDR PA 8 and implemented by Steinbeis Europa Zentrum, Pannon Business Network, and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, the accompanying study identifies initiatives that combine circularity and green technologies with practical business impact. In alignment with the Bosnian and Herzegovinian EUSDR Presidency’s focus on an accelerated green transition, the session will feature project presentations, a panel discussion, and the awarding of “EUSDR Priority Area 8 Lighthouse” certificates – fostering exchange, inspiration, and replication across the region.</i></p> |
| 09.30-11.00 | <p><b>EUSDR PA 4, 5, 6 Event: Increasing Water Security: A key to achievement of SDG</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Una”</p> <p><i>This side event is to bring attention to the SDG Agenda, recognising water as a connector to all goals of sustainable development. Examples will comprise good practices in the protection of water quality, measures to adapt to climate change (flood forecasting, mitigation of drought impacts), and the importance of vital ecosystems dependent on water.</i></p> <p><i>Draft agenda (includes keynote speech, presentations, interactive part):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>SDG Agenda and Water Goal: progress and way forward,</i></li> <li>• <i>Safeguarding drinking water supply and wastewater treatment (examples of the activities conducted by the EUSDR PA 4),</i></li> <li>• <i>Floods and droughts – interlinked phenomena (work conducted by the EUSDR PA 5),</i></li> <li>• <i>Water-related ecosystems (EUSDR PA 6).</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                       |
| 09.30-11.00 | <p><b>Meeting of the Danube Youth Council I</b></p> <p>Location: Room "Drina"</p> <p><i>In this session, members of the Danube Youth Council (DYC) will meet among themselves to discuss and streamline their activities. Each Working Group within the DYC reports on their activities. Plans for the upcoming year, potential collaboration with the Bulgarian EUSDR Presidency 2026, and the inclusion of new members will be discussed.</i></p> <p><i>The meeting is continued after the coffee break, in the same room.</i></p> <p><i>Closed meeting, for DYC members only.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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| 11.00-11.30 | Coffee break                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|             | Parallel sessions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 11.30-13.00 | <p><b>Joint Meeting EUSDR and EUSAIR National Coordinators II</b></p> <p><b>Enhancing EU Accession Support for Candidate Countries in EUSDR and EUSAIR</b></p> <p><b>Closed meeting, upon invitation only.</b></p> <p>Location: Congress Room</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 11.30-13.00 | <p><b>EUSDR PA 9 Event - Closing the Skills Gap: Green and Digital Skills for a Competitive Europe</b></p> <p>Location: Room "Holiday"</p> <p><i>Widening skills gaps and the need for more and better skills pose significant challenges within the Danube Region. The loss of young people through outward migration and skilled labour shortages hinders economic development, innovation, and social progress. Targeted and inclusive education, skills and labour market policies can help build attractive offers to attract and retain talent in the region. Building skills for life through strong educational foundations and a focus on green and digital skills are essential to meet the rapidly changing skill demands and employment needs in the green and digital transition. Promoting these skills through cooperation can help bridge the skills gap, foster economic growth, retain talent in the region, and contribute to a sustainable and more competitive Danube Region.</i></p> <p><i>Following the keynotes that provide context and strategic direction, the panel discussion brings together experts who share insights on EU strategies, trends in education and labour market systems in the region, and good practice examples on international cooperation in the fields of education and labour market policy. Panellists discuss key challenges around brain drain and the growing skills gap, showcase current initiatives addressing these issues, and highlight the role of transnational cooperation and the promotion of green and digital skills. The audience have the opportunity to ask questions and share experiences.</i></p> <p>Keynote speakers: Maryna TVERDOSTUP, Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (wiiw) – Findings of the Danube Region Monitor, Nathalie LAHIRE, Senior Economist for Education, World Bank - Assessment of green skills, foundational skills and skill gap profiles for the green transition in the Western Balkans</p> <p>Moderators: Jörg MIRTTL, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection, Austria and Jürgen SCHICK, Federal Ministry of Education, Austria, Coordinators of EUSDR Priority Area 9 – People &amp; Skills.</p> |
| 11.30-13.00 | <p><b>EUSDR PA 3 event- Eco-Culture in Motion: Green Tourism Initiatives as Part of the Sustainable Danube Network</b></p> <p>Location: Room "Neretva"</p> <p><i>The event promotes sustainable mobility by integrating travel into the tourist experience and supports inclusive tourism for all social groups.</i></p> <p><i>Develop new ecotourism services focused on nature-based solutions that protect the environment and enrich visitor experiences.</i></p> <p><i>Highlight cultural heritage as a driver of the green transition and emphasise local cuisine as an authentic part of sustainable tourism development.</i></p> <p><i>Planned topics under the theme:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Cultural heritage as a driver of green transition and sustainable development,</i></li> <li>• <i>Sustainable mobility – travel as a destination,</i></li> <li>• <i>New ecotourism services with a special focus on nature-based solutions in tourism,</i></li> <li>• <i>Inclusive tourism, blue tourism opportunities,</i></li> <li>• <i>Local cuisine: a gastronomic journey.</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

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| 11.30-13.00 | <p><b>Public Conference on EUSDR PA 8 DECIDE project</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Una”</p> <p><i>The Danube Region comprises 14 countries and is characterised by a wide variety of economies and cultures. While this diversity is advantageous, it also presents specific challenges in coordinating sustainability efforts between countries. In recognition of the need for a coherent, sustainable development strategy, 10 countries participating in the EUSDR launched the DECIDE project: 'Digital Services for the Circular Economy: A Toolkit for Regional Developers and SMEs'.</i></p> <p><i>The DECIDE solution provides a comprehensive toolbox of digital services and methods, offering access to best practice examples from various sectors, as well as training programmes to build capacity and knowledge. By promoting the adoption of circular economy business models (CEBMs), DECIDE ensures that sustainable practices become the norm in the Danube Region. The DECIDE Public Conference presents the initial results and provide an opportunity for knowledge exchange and discussion with the DECIDE project team.</i></p> |
| 11.30-13.00 | <p><b>Meeting of the Danube Youth Council II</b></p> <p>Location: Room "Drina"</p> <p><i>In this session, members of the Danube Youth Council (DYC) meet among themselves to discuss and streamline their activities. Each Working Group within the DYC reports on their activities. Plans for the upcoming year, potential collaboration with the Bulgarian EUSDR Presidency 2026, and the inclusion of new members are discussed.</i></p> <p><i>Closed meeting, for DYC members only.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 13.00-14.30 | Lunch break                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 14.30-16.00 | <p><b>Youth Engagement and Active Citizenship in the Danube Region</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Holiday”</p> <p><i>This workshop focuses on empowering young people as active contributors to the present and future of the region. Addresses challenges and opportunities for youth, including mobility, housing, employment, and trust in institutions, while tackling issues such as disinformation, lack of cooperation, and societal polarisation.</i></p> <p><i>Participants explore the youth perspective on Bosnia and Herzegovina’s EU candidate status, the EU enlargement process in the Western Balkans, and aspirations for integration. Additional topics include brain drain, entrepreneurship, capacity-building, and engaging youth in consultations and decision-making.</i></p> <p><i>The interactive workshop also showcases good practices and youth-led initiatives to foster dialogue and cooperation across the Danube Region.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 15.00-18.00 | <p><b>Steering Group Meeting EUSDR PA 9 I</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Una”</p> <p><i>The EUSDR Priority Area 9 “People and Skills” (PA 9) Steering Group consists of delegated members from ministries and other institutions that are active in the fields of labour market and education policies from all Danube Region countries. It meets twice a year with the aim of sharing updates on education and labour market developments in each country and on opportunities for cooperation within the region. Key partners of the EUSDR PA 9 also participate in the meeting and brief the Steering Group members about their current activities.</i></p> <p><i>The 29<sup>th</sup> EUSDR PA 9 Steering Group Meeting will be held as a side event of the 14<sup>th</sup> EUSDR Annual Forum in the form of a closed meeting, attendance by invitation only.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|             | <b>CLOSING OF 14<sup>TH</sup> EUSDR ANNUAL FORUM AND FAREWELL</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## Friday, 7 November 2025, 08.30 – 16.00 CET

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| 08.30-16.00 | <p><b>Training – EUSDR Policy analysis and advocacy skills</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Holiday”</p> <p><i>This training is the second in a series of training sessions that Danube Strategy Point delivers for EUSDR core stakeholders, following the Capacity Building Needs Analysis that has been conducted.</i></p> <p><i>The primary aim of these training modules is to support further enhancing the skills and competencies of new and/or existing EUSDR core stakeholders, such as National Coordinators (NCs), Priority Area Coordinators (PACs), and Steering Group (SG) members, to respond to their expressed needs and contribute to the Strategy's effective implementation.</i></p> <p><i>This training session aims to improve skills for effective policy analysis, design, advocacy, and communication. It also focuses on enhancing advocacy skills that may help involve decision-makers and gain support for policy initiatives.</i></p> <p><i>As a horizontal theme, “Cross-cultural administrative contexts” is incorporated into all trainings, ensuring that cross-cultural administrative perspectives are consistently addressed and integrated as a fundamental aspect.</i></p> <p><i>Closed meeting, attendance by invitation only.</i></p> |
| 09.00-12.00 | <p><b>Steering Group Meeting EUSDR PA 9 II</b></p> <p>Location: Room “Una”</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

*Disclaimer: The organiser reserves the right to modify the indicated session locations based on final participant confirmations or logistical requirements. Updated details will be communicated in advance of the event.*